

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

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FM AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5603

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSYLUSAKA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L MAPUTO 0294

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MZ, PO

SUBJECT: EXPULSION OF MOZAMBICAN CITIZENSHIP RENUNCIANTS:

COMMENTS OF PORTUGUESE DIPLOMAT

REF: (A) MAPUTO 258, (B) MAPUTO 271, (C) MAPUTO 292

1. SUMMARY: PORTUGUESE CONSULATE OFFICIALS ESTIMATE THAT 6,000 PORTUGUESE ARE IMMEDIATELY AFFECTED BY NEW GPRM LAW EXPELLING FORMER MOZAMBICANS WHO HAVE RENOUNCED THEIR CITIZENSHIP. HOWEVER, NUMBER COULD RISE SHARPLY DEPENDING UPON HOW GPRM INTERPRETS LAW. PORTUGUESE OFFICIALS DO NOT KNOW REASON FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW LAW, BUT FEEL LATEST GPRM MOVE WILL FURTHER ROB COUNTRY OF ESSENTIAL TECHNICIANS AND COULD DISRUPT PROSPECTS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF GPRM-PORTUGAL RELATIONS. END SUMMARY

2. EMBOFF TAKEN WITH PORTUGUESE VICE-CONSUL CARLOS SILVA

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AFTERNOON OF MARCH 21 ABOUT NEW GPRM LEGISLATION EXPELLING PORTUGUESE NATIONALS WHO CHANGED THEIR CITIZENSHIP. SILVA SAID THAT OF THE APPROXIMATELY 30,000 PORTUGUESE CITIZENS (SOME OF WHOM DUAL CITIZENS) REMAINING IN MOZAMBIQUE, AN ESTIMATED 6,000 WERE CLEARLY AFFECTED BY NEW LEGISLATION. ACCORDING TO ROUGH STATISTICS BEING KEPT BY PORTUGUESE CONSULATE, THESE 6,000 HAD SIGNED AFFIDAVITS RENOUNCING THEIR MOZAMBICAN CITIZENSHIP AND THEN ACQUIRED

PORTUGUESE PASSPORTS OUTSIDE OF THE LEGALLY PRESCRIBED 90 DAY PERIOD FOLLOWING MOZAMBIQUE'S INDEPENDENCE. UNDER TERMS OF EW DECREE, THEY HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO LEAVE UNLESS THEY RECEIVED EXEMPTIONS.

3. SILVA SAID THERE WAS A LARGER NUMBER OF PORTUGUESE NATIONALS (AND/OR PASSPORT HOLDERS) WHO HAD DECIDED TO OPT FOR PORTUGUESE CITIZENSHIP AFTER THE 90 DAY PERIOD BUT WHO HAD NOT SIGNED AFFIDAVITS FORMALLY RENOUNCING THEIR MOZAMBIQUE CITIZENSHIP. INCLUDED IN THIS GROUP WERE A LARGE NUMBER OF MULATTOS AND SOME AFRICANS WHO HAD ACQUIRED THE RIGHT TO OBTAIN PORTUGUESE PASSPORTS AS A RESULT OF MILITARY AND GOVERNMENT SERVICE. SILVA SAID MANY OF THESE AFRICANS AND MULATTOS HAD NO REAL ATTACHMENTS TO PORTUGAL BUT HAD ACQUIRED OR WERE HOLDING ON TO THEIR PORTUGUESE PASSPORTS IN CASE THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATION IN MOZAMBIQUE FORCED THEM TO FLEE. SILVA SAID THAT IF POSSESSION OF A FOREIGN PASSPORT CONSTITUTES A VIOLATION OF THE NEW DECREE (WHICH APPEARS TO BE THE CASE), THEN THE NUMBER OF PORTUGUESE (INCLUDING MULATTOS AND AFRICANS) FORCED TO LEAVE WITHIN THE 60 DAYS WOULD RISE CONSIDERABLY.

4. SILVA SAID THAT THE PORTUGUESE EMBASSY OFFICIALS WERE NOW HOLDING DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GPRM MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO CLARIFY THE LAW AND TO DETERMINE PRECISELY HOW MANY PORTUGUESE WILL BE AFFECTED BY IT. SILVA THOUGHT THAT ONCE THE GPRM IS MADE AWARE THAT NEW LAW WILL ROB THE COUNTRY OF ITS REMAINING KEY TECHNICIANS, IT MIGHT ALTER THE RULING. SILVA THEN POINTED OUT THAT A MAJORITY OF THE NEARLY 2,000 PORTUGUESE STILL WORKING FOR THE GPRM'S RAILWAY AND PORT AUTHORITY WERE AFFECTED

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BY THE DECREE. HE NOTED THAT THE BANKING SECTOR WOULD ALSO BE HARD HIT.

5. WHEN ASKED WHETHER THE PORTUGUESE EMBASSY HAD EXPECTED THE NEW REGULATION, SILVA REPLIED NO. RELATIONS BETWEEN PORTUGAL AND GPRM, HE SAID, APPEARED TO BE IMPROVING FOLLOWING THE VISIT TO LISBON BY A GPRM DELEGATION IN EARLY MARCH (LISBON 1978). SILVA CONFIRMED THAT VISIT BY GPRM DELEGATION HAD GONE WELL, THAT LISBON HAD ASKED FOR AGREEMENT FOR A NEW PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR TO MOZAMBIQUE AND THAT GPRM HAD SUBMITTED AGREEMENT FOR LUIS BERNARDO HONWANA AS MOZAMBIQUE'S FIRST AMBASSADOR TO LISBON. ALTHOUGH SILVA CLAIMED NOT TO KNOW HOW AUTHORITIES IN LISBON WERE REACTING TO GPRM'S EXPULSION LAW, HE SAID IT WOULD NOT FOSTER CLIMATE FOR IMPROVEMENT IN GPRM-MOZAMBIQUE RELATIONS.

6. BEFORE CONCLUDING CONVERSATION, SILVA STATED THAT APPROXIMATELY 10,000 PORTUGUESE CONTRACT WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES WERE EXPECTED TO LEAVE MOZAMBIQUE IN JUNE WHEN THEIR TWO-YEAR

CONTRACTS EXPIRED. WITH THE NEW LAW AND THE UNCERTAINTY GENERATED BY IT, THE NUMBER OF DEPARTING PORTUGUESE WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY RISE.

7. COMMENT: IF GPRM FOLLOWS THROUGH WITH ITS DECISION TO EXPEL ALL THOSE WHO CHANGED THEIR NATIONALITIES OR ACQUIRED PORTUGUESE PASSPORTS AFTER THE DEADLINE, THE SHORTAGE OF SKILLED TECHNICIANS AND MANAGERS WILL BECOME INCREASINGLY ACUTE. HOWEVER, EVEN IF GPRM RECOGNIZES THIS FACT, IT IS DEBATABLE WHETHER IT WILL DRAW BACK FROM FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LAW.
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